

2015-115 AUDIT SCOPE AND OBJECTIVES

Dual-Status Youth

The audit by the California State Auditor will provide independently developed and verified information related to dual-status youth, and will include, but not be limited to, the following:

1. Review and evaluate the laws, rules, and regulations significant to the audit objectives.
2. For a selection of six counties (three nondual-status counties, one lead agency county, one county using the on-hold model for at least some of its cases, and Los Angeles County), compare the services provided to foster youth over the past three years who were either deemed to have dual status in the dependency and delinquency systems or had their dependency cases closed as a result of an open delinquency case (crossover youth). The comparison of services should include the county agency's case management efforts to secure special education planning (if applicable) and health care services, including mental health counseling, as well as the extent of the agency's permanency planning efforts.
3. At the same selection of six counties as above, and to the extent possible, compare outcomes for crossover youth including, but not limited to, the following:
 - a. Convictions and sentences for juvenile offenses.
 - b. Extent and length of time of criminal justice involvement.
 - c. Recidivism rates.
 - d. Rates of re-entry into foster care.
 - e. Number and types of placements.
 - f. Graduation rates from high school or its equivalent.
4. For the three dual-status counties selected, examine the following:
 - a. How effectively the child welfare services and probation departments, as well as juvenile justice courts and attorneys, are working together to meet the needs of crossover youth. Describe how these integrated partners maintain confidentiality while still effectively communicating needed information.
 - b. How well these three counties collect data on crossover youth.
 - c. How often and under what conditions foster youth are deemed to have dual status.
 - d. What guidelines the three dual-status counties are using and whether these guidelines are consistent with best practices used nationally.

- e. The extent to which they have established, and adhered to, timelines for crossover youth's dual-status determinations, reunification with their families, and/or efforts to ensure a more permanent placement for these children.
 - f. The continuity of dependency services, including maintaining the same court-appointed special advocate, dependency attorney, and social worker.
- 5. Ascertain why the three nondual-status counties selected have chosen to not undertake dual-status protocols.
- 6. At the six selected counties, compare the training and management oversight social workers and applicable probation officers receive related to crossover youth, as well as any differences in funding that may be affecting the services that crossover youth receive.
- 7. Determine what progress has been made regarding the following concerns raised by the Judicial Council report required by Assembly Bill 129:
 - a. Lack of communication and collaboration between agencies regarding specific responsibilities.
 - b. Misunderstanding and lack of knowledge among various participants in the dependency and delinquency systems.
 - c. Lack of guidance from state-level agencies and the need for additional training on how dual-status protocols should be implemented.
- 8. Review and assess any other issues that are significant to the audit.